

**Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan  
Emergency Support Function #6**

**Emergency Support Function – No. 6  
MASS CARE, HOUSING, AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Primary Agency:**

Department of Social Services (VDSS)

**VERT ESF Branch:**

Human Services Branch

**Support Agencies:**

- American Red Cross (ARC)
- Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)
- Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS)
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- Higher Education Institutions in Virginia
- Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Department of General Services (DGS)
- Virginia State Police (VSP)
- Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)
- Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VAVOAD)
- The Salvation Army
- Virginia Workers Compensation Commission (VWCC) Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF)

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**Introduction**

**PURPOSE**

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6 – Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services is an all-hazards approach that supports local government and nongovernmental organization (NGO) efforts to address the non-medical mass care, housing, and human services needs of individuals and/or families impacted by natural and/or technological incidents.

**SCOPE**

ESF-6 promotes the delivery of services and the implementation of programs to assist

individuals, households and families impacted by potential or actual incidents. This service delivery includes immediate relief, short-term housing and relocation assistance and direct financial services for individuals impacted by an incident within jurisdictions of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

State augmentation of ESF-6 in the VEOC is the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) who supports requests as directed under the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP).

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The three primary components of ESF-6, Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services, are described below.

#### Mass Care

The ESF-6 mass care function includes:

- **Coordination.** Beginning at the local level to bring together the non-medical human services of government and non-government organizations.
- **Shelter.** An emergency shelter is an immediate short-term accommodation either (1) designated by local officials for persons threatened by or displaced by an incident (*Refer to Mass Care in Standard Shelter Operations*), or (2) designated by state officials directing a mandatory evacuation across jurisdictional boundaries either before or after an incident (*Refer to, Shelter Operations in Support of A Mass Evacuation*).

Public emergency shelters will provide accommodations for all population groups. Appropriate provisions must be made within the shelter facilities to accommodate people with special medical needs that do not require hospital admission, people without their own transportation, and registered sex offenders.

Additionally, sheltering for pets and service animals must be included in planning and coordinated with ESF-11. *Refer to ESF 11 for details regarding pet and animal sheltering.*

For mass evacuations directed by state officials, the VDSS will coordinate the designation of shelter facilities and the operation of shelters for people who evacuate out of their home jurisdiction. (*Shelter Operations in Support of Mass Evacuation*).

- **Feeding.** Feeding is provided to disaster victims and emergency workers through a combination of fixed sites, mobile feeding units, and bulk distribution of food. Feeding is based on sound nutritional standards and to the extent possible includes meeting the requirements of victims with special dietary needs. *Refer to ESF-11 for details regarding bulk food.*
- **Emergency First Aid.** Emergency first aid, consisting of basic first aid and referral to appropriate medical personnel and facilities, is provided at mass care facilities and at designated sites. Provision for services is coordinated with ESF-8. *Refer to ESF-8 for details regarding medical care services.*
- **Reunification Services.** This service collects information regarding individuals residing within the affected area and makes the information available to immediate family members outside the affected area. The system also aids in reunification of family members within the affected area.
- **Bulk Distribution.** Emergency relief items, limited to urgent needs, are distributed through sites established within the affected area. These sites are used to coordinate the distribution of food, water, and ice to people living in areas where the normal supplies and distribution system are temporarily disrupted

#### Housing

The ESF-6 housing function involves monitoring the need and availability of housing units to use temporarily for displaced people. Additionally, housing includes assisting in the implementation of the federal disaster assistance program to provide financial assistance to persons whose homes were damaged in the incident.

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The housing function is coordinated with ESF 14.

#### Human Services

The ESF-6 human services component coordinates various government and nongovernmental organizations that implement programs and provide services for people impacted by the disaster. These services may include:

- Provision of behavioral health services
- Services to expedite benefit claims and financial assistance applications
- Case management
- Distribution of donated goods
- Direct support services such as building clean-up, debris removal, and child care.
- Implementation and management of grant programs such as the FEMA Other Needs Assistance (ONA), or the Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) for victims of acts of terrorism. (*Refer to COVEOP, Support Annex 2 – Recovery Programs.*)
- In large disasters, Family Assistance Centers (FAC) or Disaster Service Centers (DSC) may be established to provide a central location for the seamless delivery of services across multiple government and nongovernmental voluntary organizations. See Section 5 below.

#### **MISSION**

In time of emergency, VDSS will coordinate the provision of sheltering, feeding, emergency first aid, emergency relief supplies and other basic human services provided by government and nongovernmental voluntary agencies.

During non-emergency operations, to support local DSS planning efforts to develop and maintain a capability to care for displaced persons in public shelters, to deliver relief supplies and services to disaster victims; and to prepare to care for

the disabled, the elderly, and other special medical needs populations in time of emergency, primarily by encouraging and facilitating self-sufficiency.

#### **POLICIES**

Underlying principles include the following:

- ESF-6 support may vary depending on an assessment of incident impact(s), the magnitude and type of event, and the stage of the response and recovery efforts.
- Types of agencies tasked with ESF-6 activities vary by locality and region.
- To support mass care activities and provide services without regard to economic status or racial, religious, political, ethnic, or other affiliation.
- To support ESF-6 activities and provide services in accordance with existing statutes, rules, and regulations.
- To assign personnel to support ESF-6 functions in accordance with the rules and regulations of their respective parent agencies.
- To coordinate with ESFs 1, 3, 5, 11, 14 and others regarding recovery and mitigation assistance, as appropriate.
- To reduce duplication of effort and benefits, to the extent possible. This includes streamlining assistance as appropriate and identifying recovery and mitigation measures to support local planning efforts.
- To coordinate with VDEM and other local and state agencies and voluntary organizations in evaluating current and future shelter facilities with intent to utilize space to accommodate multiple populations within a single facility.

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- To coordinate with ESF-8 in developing partnerships and written agreements with the health care community for the provision of health care services to those sheltered who do not require hospital admission.

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**CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

- A. Response and recovery efforts are a local government responsibility, thus all event activities begin locally in accordance with the local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that assigns duties and responsibilities, identifies shelter facilities, and sets forth the operating procedures for public shelters.
- B. The local DSS generally is designated responsibility for ESF-6 functions although shelter operations may be, by written agreement, delegated or shared with the local ARC chapter.
- C. Local government may request assistance from other local non-governmental organizations to assist with ESF-6 functions.
- D. As local resources are exceeded, the local government may request assistance from the state.
- E. Initial response activities focus on meeting urgent mass care needs of victims.
- F. Recovery efforts are initiated concurrently with response activities. Close coordination is required among those agencies responsible for response operations and recovery activities, and other nongovernmental organizations providing assistance.
- G. Medical care, long-term assisted, mental health and residential facilities including prisons are responsible for developing and implementing plans for their

patients/residents in an evacuation. Facility management should consult with local government in the development of plans.

- H. All local, regional and state human services organizations may be requested to assist with ESF-6 functions. All of the major voluntary disaster relief organizations with active disaster response resources in Virginia are members of the Virginia VOAD. IN emergency situations a VAVOAD representative is present in the VEOC to coordinate the provision of resources from its member organizations, and a designated VAVOAD liaison is assigned to the JFO during recovery operations.

**ORGANIZATION**

- A. The Department of Social Services (DSS) is designated the lead agency for ESF-6 and maintains overview of ESF-6 activities, resolves conflicts, and responds to ESF-6 questions.
- B. The American Red Cross (ARC) and VAVOAD assist in the coordination of sheltering and feeding operations.
- C. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, local government is responsible for providing ESF-6 services for persons within its jurisdiction. The local Department of Social Services or the local Red Cross chapter is typically responsible for shelter operations with support from other local agencies and organizations.

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**Section 1: Mass Care in Standard Shelter Operations**

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**Purpose**

To provide state support to local ESF-6 functions.

**Concept of Operations**

**Local**

- A. Shelter operations are a local government function to be provided in accordance with local Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs). The EOP should identify assignment of duties and responsibilities and public shelter facilities; describe provisions for feeding, overnight sleeping accommodations, back-up power, augmented communications to include radio backup, a medical aid station, security, traffic control and fire inspections; and set forth procedures for operating each public shelter.
- B. Local plans should make reasonable accommodations for evacuation and sheltering of diverse populations as listed below:
  - 1. Populations with communication or mobility limitations (deaf, blind, non-English speaking, wheelchair bound).
  - 2. Populations with conditions that may require assistance with daily activities but do not require hospital admission or hospital sheltering.
  - 3. Populations who are transportation deficient or have no means to evacuate themselves out of harm's way.
  - 4. Populations who present themselves accompanied by pets and/or service animals.
- C. Local government may provide shelter operations in cooperation and coordination with local chapters of the ARC. Local government maintains the legal overall responsibility for the sheltering of its citizens. Through partnership the resources of the ARC can be made available to support local sheltering operations.
- D. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, either the local DSS or the local ARC chapter is typically responsible for shelter operations with support from other local agencies and organizations.
- E. When local government partners with the local ARC chapter for shelter operations, an official memorandum of understanding should be consummated between the two.
- F. Local government will arrange shelter training for its employees through the ARC. Local governments will periodically exercise their capability to operate public shelters.
- G. Localities will use established procedures (local EOC to VEOC) to request assistance. Requests will be processed and delivery coordinated through the appropriate ESF in the VEOC.

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- H. The local DSS, in conjunction with the local ARC, will provide information to the local EOC on the number and location of shelters opened and the numbers of evacuees. Shelter information for evacuees will be provided to the media through the local Public Information Officer (PIO).
- I. Shelter managers will collect and compile information for reports as needed. Information will include data on sheltering, feeding and staff resources. This information must be included on the daily shelter operations status report to the local EOC for inclusion in the daily report to the VEOC.

**State**

- A. The VEOC will notify the VDSS designee whenever a local request for shelter assistance is made during a local emergency. The VEOC may request the designee report to the VEOC when a developing situation is likely to require sheltering support to localities.
- B. VDSS may collaborate with ARC to establish and maintain liaison with the VEOC before and during an emergency.
- C. VDSS in conjunction with the ARC, will coordinate with local government, local social services agencies, and local ARC chapters to ensure that adequate shelters are opened when needed, that the needs of the physically challenged and elderly are considered, and the public is informed of personal supplies to bring to a shelter, and the location of the shelter.
- D. VDSS and ARC will work with their local counterparts to ensure that shelters are provided with adequate comfort and relief supplies when opened.
- E. When/if the local EOC request state assistance for Mass Care needs, VDSS will coordinate the assistance with other state agencies and non-government organizations through the VEOC VERT.
- F. VDSS and ARC will collect and compile information for reports as needed. Information will include number and location of local shelters opened, number of shelterees, feeding and staff resources. This information will be documented in the VEOC Situation Reports and shared with the VEOC Joint Information Center (JIC).

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## **Section 2: Shelter Operations in Support of Mass Evacuation**

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### **Purpose**

To provide coordination of local, state, federal, and voluntary resources in identifying, preparing and operating emergency shelters in support of a mass evacuation.

### **Reference:**

COVEOP Mass Evacuation and Sheltering Support Annex 6 (Volume II)  
Appendix 2: Sheltering

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## **Section 3: Refuge of Last Resort (ROLR)**

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### **Purpose**

To provide a safe place for evacuees to seek immediate protection from harm during a disaster event.

### **Reference:**

COVEOP Mass Evacuation and Sheltering Support Annex 6 (Volume II)  
Appendix 2: Sheltering, Tab A: Refuge Of Last Resort

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## **Section 4 – Host Sheltering**

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### **Purpose**

To provide coordination of local, state, federal, and voluntary resources in identifying, preparing and operating host shelters.

### **Reference:**

COVEOP Mass Evacuation and Sheltering Support Annex 6 (Volume II)  
Appendix 2: Sheltering, Tab B: Host Sheltering

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### Section 5 – Combined Family Assistance Center (FAC) and Disaster Services Center (DSC)

#### Purpose

To establish an all-hazards organizational structure to provide a single point of entry for the seamless delivery of services and the dissemination of information to victims and families following a large-scale incident, or one in which there are mass casualties, or in which many of those impacted are not residents in the disaster area.

A consolidated comprehensive services center will be called a Family Assistance Center (FAC) and transition into a Disaster Services Center (DSC) when or as deemed necessary.

Implementation of the consolidated concept for family services requires consensus among government, voluntary and commercial providers of disaster assistance. Planning documents, such as memoranda or contingency contracts, will establish pre-disaster agreements among service providers to co-locate in one facility and to coordinate operations for the benefit of victims and their families. Planning activities should involve state, local and regional entities.

#### Scope

The concept is modeled after the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) actions following an aviation disaster. The military also uses a consolidated approach to family services, as demonstrated in the actions of the Pentagon following the terrorist attack in 2001. The National Capital Region (NCR) expanded the NTSB concept and developed a standard operating guide for implementing a FAC System. The *National Capital Region Family Assistance/Reunification Center System Plan (NCR FAC Plan)* calls for a full range of primary recovery services, including reunification as one of many service components. The NCR FAC Plan

provides models of organization, services, definitions and processes that jurisdictions

throughout the Commonwealth can use to develop plans and procedures for consolidated family service centers.

The concept of consolidated services can utilize a physical or virtual platform or both. In most cases, a FAC will include both aspects: one or more physical facilities that provide face-to-face services in a protected and coordinated environment, and a virtual system of information technology components supported by on-location staff.

The FAC can also include temporary housing for non-resident victims and families. The FAC can be set-up within a hotel or other residential facility to provide the security and convenience families will need in the days immediately after a disaster.

#### Overview of FAC Services

The types of services provided at an FAC may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reunification Services to include Ante Mortem Data, DNA , and Medical Records collections; and Missing Persons Activities
- Behavioral Health Care Services
- Communications Services (phone, internet, bridge conferences)
- Benefits Application Entry Points (Insurers, FEMA, CICF, VEC, etc.)
- Housing Counseling
- Child and Adult Day Care
- Food
- Personal Care Services
- Medical Services
- Spiritual Care
- Personal Identification Services
- Transportation
- Financial Assistance



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- Daily Family Briefings
- Referral Services
- Case Management

This list is indicative of but not inclusive of all the types of services that may be needed by resident and non-resident victims of disasters.

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### CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. The Commonwealth of Virginia Family Assistance Center (FAC) and Disaster Services Center (DCS) Support Annex provides the guidance for the execution and operation of FAC or DSC following a mass casualty event. Other supplemental agency and interagency plans provide details on authorities, response protocols, and technical guidance for responding to and managing specific functions related to mass casualty events.
2. At the onset of a mass casualty incident, plans will be implemented by the various agencies and organizations identified as primary and support.
3. The Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) will immediately notify the ESF-6 of the incident. ESF-6 will immediately notify the Dept of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF), and the Dept of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRAS) to provide the details of the situation as reported by the VEOC. The plans of each agency will provide the protocols for activation and deployment.
4. ESF-6 personnel will report to the incident, coordinate/determine a physical site for FAC operations, and assume oversight and management of

the FAC including establishing operational policies, maintaining situational awareness, coordinating needed services and/or resources, identifying gaps and requesting additional resources.

5. The responding agencies and organizations in the FAC will function as a Unified Command within the Incident Command Structure in which the FAC will be operating. Representatives from the agencies and organizations must have authority and responsibility to commit resources and make decisions on behalf of the agency or organization.

### ORGANIZATION

1. The Family Assistance Center (FAC) is an operational entity of ESF-6, Mass Care, Housing and Human Services. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) leads ESF-6 in the VEOC and will manage oversight of the FAC.
2. Agencies and organizations in support of VDSS and the FAC mission will consist of the agencies identified on page 1 of this ESF. Depending on the extent of the disaster or event, other organizations may also be involved in the operation of the FAC and in the various service components of the FAC.

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